



LEMON LEOPARD

TALL TALES EVALUATION REPORT

Rent-to-Equity Pilot 2019-2023

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INTRODUCTION

Between 2019 and 2023, Lemon Leopard launched its pilot housing initiative initially called Collaborative Care Communities, later renamed Tall Tales to test the feasibility of our innovative Rent-into-Equity model.

While the pilot did not involve ownership of the building, and therefore equity could not be formally accrued, we developed a paper-based simulation system that allowed residents to accrue hypothetical equity based on rent contributions, residency duration, and engagement in community governance.

The pilot was designed to address three obstacles identified by our members: asset inequality, the loss of community spaces, and disconnection from the natural world. It provided temporary, rotational housing for residents for three months at a time, enabling the inclusion of a diverse group and testing social, operational, and financial aspects of our model.

PILOT OVERVIEW

Location: Derelict shoe factory in East London

Duration: 2019–2023

Residential Capacity: 10–12 residents per cycle

Housing Model: Temporary residency, simulated equity accrual

Community Hub: Ground floor cultural space, Folkore

Key Supporters: Community Led Housing London, Greater London Authority, National Lottery Communities Fund, LandAid

Residents participated in a rotational system, staying for up to three months, allowing us to trial the Rent-into-Equity concept with a broad range of participants and test governance, social cohesion, and financial modelling.



Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny

CASE STUDY: EM

Em joined Tall Tales as a rotational resident at age 20, having recently transitioned out of foster care. With limited family support and a precarious rental history, Em initially faced uncertainty about living independently.

Engagement and Learning:

- Em participated fully in governance meetings, helping to shape house rules and schedules.
- She received training in budgeting and collaborative decision-making, learning how to manage shared resources and plan household expenditures.
- Through the rotational residency, Em gained first-hand experience of equity accrual as a concept, understanding how rent could contribute to long-term security in a full-scale Equity-to-Rent scheme.

Outcomes:

- Em reported a greater sense of stability and confidence, feeling equipped to navigate housing independently.
- She built strong peer networks, which she continues to draw on as she moves into longer-term housing at The Pack.
- Em's experience highlighted the importance of community support for care leavers, feeding into Lemon Leopard's allocations and governance processes.



Living at Tall Tales showed me that a home isn't just four walls—it's the people you share it with, the decisions you help make, and the future you can build together.

CASE STUDY: DANIELA

Daniela joined Tall Tales as a participant while working full-time in social care. He was motivated both by the opportunity for affordable housing and by a desire to engage with a community-led project that aligned with his values.

Engagement and Learning:

- Daniela took a leading role in co-designing schedules and operational procedures, drawing on his professional expertise in supporting vulnerable individuals.
- She explored the concept of equity-to-rent through paper-based simulations, contributing feedback on how the model could be made fair and transparent for future residents.
- She also participated in Folkore events, helping to facilitate workshops and mentoring younger residents.

Outcomes:

- Daniela strengthened his leadership and organisational skills, particularly in a community governance context.
- She developed a deeper understanding of intergenerational and systemic inequality in housing, informing his advocacy work in social care.
- Her involvement enhanced cross-generational cohesion within Tall Tales, bridging experience gaps between younger and older residents.



Being part of this project taught me that when communities take the lead, even buildings that were forgotten can become places of hope, security, and belonging.

CASE STUDY: HUGO

Hugo, a freelance artist, joined Tall Tales seeking a supportive environment to live and collaborate with others in a creative community. He brought professional skills in arts, event management, and community engagement.

Engagement and Learning:

- Hugo led several cultural workshops and performances at Folkore, using his skills to enrich the social and creative life of residents and the wider community.
- He engaged actively in collective decision-making and problem-solving around household management, drawing parallels between running a cultural hub and a shared housing space.
- He also participated in simulations of equity accrual, helping to refine the model's clarity and accessibility for future residents.

Outcomes:

- Hugo reported increased social connection and a sense of purpose, noting the value of contributing to a project that combines housing and community-building.
- His creative work contributed to broader community engagement, attracting local visitors and fostering awareness of the Tall Tales model.
- Hugo continues to act as a mentor for residents transitioning to The Pack, ensuring knowledge and experience are passed on.



Tall Tales proved that housing and creativity can live together. When we're trusted to shape our own spaces, we invest in both the walls and the life inside them.

FINANCIAL SIMULATION MODELLING

Because we did not own the building, equity accrual was simulated as follows:

- Each month of residency counted toward a hypothetical equity balance.
- Contributions were tracked against the projected market value of a unit at The Pack.
- Simulations included scenarios for 3, 6, 9, and 12 months of residency.
- Financial modelling explored affordability, long-term sustainability, and the impact of rotational residency.

Table 1. Equity Accrual: These projections helped refine The Pack’s Rent-into-Equity model and confirmed that residents could accrue meaningful equity over time.

Residency	Monthly Rent Paid	Simulated Equity Accrual
3 months	600	1%
6 months	600	2%
12 months	600	4%

SOCIAL ARCHITECTURE INSIGHTS

Tall Tales tested a cooperative governance model, allowing residents to:

- Participate in operational decisions.
- Plan and run cultural and community events.
- Learn conflict resolution, budgeting, and maintenance coordination.

Challenges included managing temporary turnover and onboarding residents quickly. Lessons informed The Pack's structure, emphasizing clear roles, training, and community oversight.



***Families are not only born; they are also
chosen***

OPERATIONAL LEARNING

The rotational residency model allowed a wide variety of participants to engage with the principles of Equity-to-Rent, bringing different backgrounds, experiences, and needs into the pilot. By rotating residents every three months, the project created a dynamic environment in which diverse groups could test the social and operational frameworks of community-led housing.

Temporary housing arrangements provided a practical setting to observe how rules, governance structures, and community integration function in real time. Residents could participate in decision-making, experience the challenges of shared living, and contribute feedback on policies and practices—insights that would inform future full-scale developments.

Since the Tall Tales building was not owned by Lemon Leopard, equity accrual was conducted as a paper-based exercise. This enabled participants to understand how long-term value is created and tracked, and to explore the financial mechanics of the model without actual property transfer. Even in this simulated form, residents gained hands-on experience with the idea of building security and shared ownership over time.

Community members were deeply involved in co-designing the day-to-day operation of Tall Tales, from defining communal norms to shaping governance processes. This engagement strengthened capacity for self-managed housing and provided practical lessons for how residents could run future developments like The Pack, ensuring that governance and operations are rooted in collective experience rather than imposed externally.

OUTPUTS

- Residents Hosted: 32 participants accommodated over four years through rotational residency of 3 months each, enabling a broad range of people to experience the model.
- Governance Participation: 100% of residents engaged in decision-making, contributing to the development of house rules, conflict resolution protocols, and operational procedures.
- Cultural Hub Activity: 54 workshops, performances, and community events held at Folkore, with over 1,200 attendees in total.
- Skill Development: All 32 residents received training in governance, budgeting, property maintenance, and collaborative decision-making.
- Diversity of Participation: 40% residents from marginalised or underrepresented communities.

OUTCOMES

- Empowered Residents: Residents gained practical skills in self-management, financial literacy, and community governance, enabling them to take leadership
- Community Cohesion: Rotational residency and collaborative governance strengthened bonds among participants, creating peer support networks and a culture of collective care.
- Cultural Enrichment: Folkore activities provided sustained local cultural engagement, enhancing community life.
- Practical Validation of the Model: Paper-based equity allowed residents to understand the dynamics of equity accrual and long-term value creation, preparing them for participation in full-scale Equity-to-Rent projects.

CONCLUSION

The Tall Tales pilot has demonstrated that community-led initiatives can successfully reclaim and revitalise Assets of Community Value, transforming disused or neglected buildings into vibrant spaces that serve multiple social purposes. By engaging residents directly in governance, co-design, and operational decision-making, Lemon Leopard has shown that even temporary interventions can build capacity, foster cohesion, and generate tangible social impact.

Equity-to-Rent, tested through Tall Tales, offers a credible, scalable pathway to secure, long-term housing. Even in a pilot setting without full property ownership, residents were able to experience the principles of equity accrual, collaborative management, and community stewardship.

Together, these approaches demonstrate that derelict or underutilised buildings, particularly pubs, can be preserved and revitalised through radical co-production and innovative housing models. By integrating social, cultural, and housing objectives, Lemon Leopard creates sustainable, community-driven solutions that keep buildings in public use, foster resident empowerment, and maintain affordability for those most excluded from conventional property markets.

The pilot underscores two critical lessons for future development:

1. Community-Led Action Works: When local people identify assets and co-design interventions, projects are more responsive, resilient, and socially meaningful.
2. Equity-to-Rent is Viable: With appropriate governance, financial modelling, and resident engagement, this model offers a practical way to secure long-term housing while sustaining the broader community mission.

Key challenges:

1. Time and resource needed to locate Assets of Community Value
2. Funding needed to secure the Assets of Community Value



THANK YOU

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Resource Page

